

J2024-003 Jane DeCarly transcript.docx

Jenner Archive transcription 4-20-003 by Carol Sklenicka
Jane DeCarly, 1979~

Other voices: Elinor Twohy, Eula Long, Josephine [Wright?], Amy ____, David Silva
They seem to be meeting in the old hospital building on Balboa in Jenner.

Jane: I haven't been here since it was a hospital. I remember the doctor, Dr. Warren, and his assistant, Mrs. Reardon. Talked to my older sister Kaye this morning and she was a registered nurse who trained in Berkeley. She remembers more than I do. She had recently heard from Mrs. Reardon and now has passed away. Kay had a convalescent home in Berkeley. All these years had passed—Kay probably hadn't seen her since 1912 or so.

The hospital closed soon after the mill was closed. I remember the mill very well and the man who was in charge of it, Mr. Green. I don't know where Dr. Warren went. No one knows the date when the mill closed. There were a very few houses right where Jerry's place is now and the mill sat right behind there.

The train tracks going up to the beginning of Russian Gulch went right over Elinor's house, right along the coast. The boats used to land down below the little knoll there. A little wagon road along beside the railroad track. I'd come out with my grandfather in a horse and cart and watch them load the boats. They had some kind of a chute they put the lumber on to load it onto the boats. There was no turntable. The little train had to back up to get back to Jenner.

There was no lumber mill at the Gulch then. But Mr. Rule had a lumber mill up there. Eula says even when I first came here there were the remains of a mill there.

Jane: I left home here in 1923 to go to Nurse's training. When I came back there was some kind of a mill there for second growth. I think by that time Mr. Rule was gone. Mr. Rule and my father were very great friends. Mr. Rule had a red Stutz bearcat car. We'd be frightened when our father went for a ride with him. He was quite a gay blade. Mrs. Morrill who was his secretary for many years, we were friendly with her too. After Mr. Rule passed away and I lost my first husband and came home to Duncan Mills, Mrs. Morrill would have us up to dinner. It was so beautiful. A showplace.

Josephine: I remember going up to the Rule Ranch and a beautiful house with a trimmed box hedge. Those were Cypress hedges.

David: Do you know about the old stagecoach road that ran up the coast? We have tried and tried to figure out how they did that. All we've been able to find out is it went by the Rule Ranch and up the coast.

Jane: Check back on the life history of Black Bart. Black Bart made several robberies along the road between Cazadero and Fort Ross. That was the main road. Do you know the place they called Fisk Mill?

Josephine: I'm worthless in the historical society.

Jane: There is a place called Black Bart's Gulch—there was a robbery there so there must have been a road there.

David: Where did they cross the river and how did they go up the coast?

Woman: they must have crossed on a ferry. Before there was even a ferry they came from Occidental to the river.

Woman and Jane: At one time there was a bridge near Markham. Other woman: I remember my mother talking about a bridge there. The water came up and washed it out. You can see cement things there, concrete pilings out in the river there where the railroad track went up into Willow Creek. It was just there for one year, a wagon bridge and then it went out and they started the ferry. That was when they started the railroad to Willow Creek.

Jane: father worked for Duncans Mills Land and Lumber Co. There was a company store was more over where the bridge is (in DM).

Elinor: Some of the old postcards up at Jenner ... she didn't bring them... they have pictures of this bridge or mill?

Jane: Where our old road used to go around. It's a deadend there. Where the little gift shop is now, there was the orchard, the Orchard Home hotel. It was a two-story building with a doctor there and they lived upstairs and they had a regular resort. There were little guest houses. We had quite a population here--there were 50 children in school when I went to school! We had to sit two to a seat and poke each other with pencils. Just one teacher.

My uncle Will was the teacher when I started, he used to try to make me an example. My mother's brother. My cousin Margaret Parmeter was the last teacher there. My son Daniel was the last graduate, the only one in 8th grade that year—he's 49 now, and then he was 13 So when was it? He's 49 this year and he was 13 then.

Why was the school called Slokum....? Jane does not know. Has it confused with the school at Willow Creek. Someone else (Josephine?) says her mother went up to school at Willow Creek.

Jane: My younger sister taught at Willow Creek. We lived in a little house at Markhams and took the ferry to school. I graduated from there. It burned in about 1967.

We left that little school right and went up and had the school right where the Baxmans live now. My sister and I lived in just a cottage really. Was there a mill there then? No. There's a big house there now, they've been remodeling it. Mr. Baxman said he found some remains of an old hotel a couple of miles up and there was a little railroad that went up Willow Creek.

When did your family first come here?

Jane: mother and father came here as bride and groom. Maybe in the 1880s. My older sister is 83 now, so it would have been before that. We lived in the house that's still standing until I was about seven. On beyond that was Mr. Frazier's house. Then we moved to a larger house that had 14 rooms, the old Duncan house. You can see it at the edge of one of the pictures they have the depot now. You can see the edge of our house next door, one of the upstairs windows. . .

My father left it to my sister who sold it to my cousin and they let it go to ruin. I'm glad it's gone—I couldn't have stood to see it go to pieces. We had just finished painting it and putting a new roof on. My cousin rented it out and it got worse and worse. Had a beautiful rose garden. I can close my eyes and see it. Before I came home to live in 1933, the big old mansion was still standing then but it was quite dilapidated and they finally tore it down.

We must get back to Jenner. I remember when the mail came in on the train and Mrs. Wiley would get the mail in the company store in Duncans Mills and bring it to Jenner by horse and buggy and cart she had. And then she would pick up the mail and bring it back and it would go out on the afternoon train.

The mail for farther up the coast went through Cazadero.

Mrs. Wiley was just a mail carrier. She was not the postmaster. The man who was the bookkeeper for the store, Mr. Frazier, Mr. Duncan's brother-in-law. He was the first postmaster. But I have old records from my father's friend Mr. Frazier was the postmaster with the records of money orders that were purchased in gold pieces

My husband got the post office moved over to our store. Elinor says he moved there in 1915 and was there till 1975. Elinor says the post office opened in 1862. One of the things in the records was a letter upbraiding Mr. Frazier for using PO boxes without charging the customers.

Elinor: the post office moved in 1925 from one store. The Jenner PO opened in 1862.

David: Asks her to describe earliest memories.

Jane: I can see it in my mind's eye: the mill and the little track and this very tall bridge with crossbeams under it. Mr. Olmstead who grew beautiful sweetpeas. And he grew vegetables.

Josephine: The old man called Smokey. I remember him well, I was a big girl when he died. He lived over on the sandhill across the river near when we were born, past that. On the same hill but more north. He went out in the flood. He and his dog came over to get a can of chocolate and they saw him go out the mouth in his boat he must have had an attack. Because he'd crossed the river how many times. A rowboat. You know how slick the water is. They found his body down at Goat Rock. His dog swam ashore. He was the nicest man, a Phillipino man.

Jane: He was the dearest old man, we just loved him. He worked for my father in the woods for so many years. He was a spool-tender. He had a large . . . Always wore a bandana. He would walk to the mill (after coming) from across the river in his boat. We were children dad had a boat with an engine in the middle. We would catch lots of crabs in the river.

Where did he get his water? He caught the rainwater. We used to go there for water. It goes in a covered cistern. It's lovely water, it gets a little rancid but it's good to bathe in. He might have gotten some fresh water from the spring on the hill. His name was Cosmo Concho or Cocho. Came from the Phillipines, lived alone, never married.

Were you ever in this house when it was a hospital? I remember it as a very large white house when I was a child.

My brother Steve went to school there – in Jenner School? It's always been in the same place. But he started at Russian Gulch. Someone else thought he started at Fort Ross, just for a short time. But in 1904 he came back here and started here. Some discussion of where schools were at different times, Elinor says hard to verify.

Hard to imagine enough children. Well there was a lot of logging going on around here. Several stores, two rows of houses, blacksmith, mill, millpond. [Not clear if they are talking about Duncans Mills or Russian Gulch] One street was called Pig Alley, which is why we still have that name. (Pig Alley is still a store in Duncans Mills, maybe in a DeCarly building?)

Mr. Fitz's brother-in-law. Curtis Richards. Elinor says she knew him.

Elinor: Curtis in the shack below us was a bandmaster during WW One. You'd hear his music at night, never know what instrument he'd play. Not a great musician but it was fun. There is also a story of a mechanical dragon in the river that he could work and he'd bring it up when a boat approaches. He used to live on the Fitz land and then he was thrown off for cutting a tree without permission. Then he squatted on this land and built the shack by the river. Later he went up to Plantation, a hunting lodge.

The road up the hill.... Hotels and stagecoach stop...on Seaview Ranch they called it. There must have been a road down from Barbara Black's ranch. A logging road.

I hear from the granddaughter of the people who owned Plantation.

The new road up the coast beginning where you turned to go up Meyer's Grade Road – in the 1930—they still used pick and shovels to build the new road up the coast. There was a documentary about it. Fresno Scrapers. Like a huge dustpan.

Side B:

Jane: My father is responsible for not cutting those trees by the Cazadero music camp. He said they were just too pretty. Quite a bit of conversation about how they used to log more carefully than they do now. Speculation by Mr. Silva about why one 2000 year old tree was left standing. How they used fire to clear the brush ("slash") and how the process was less destructive than the way they take trees now. It was frightening to see the burning. How did they control it? They didn't do it in the dry season. Men would have shovels and shovel dirt on to control the fire.

Some ranchers still do a controlled burn and the forest department is starting to do it too.

Rule Ranch: don't know how they came to this part of the country. Charlie Rule never had a profession that I knew of, but he raised cattle. He was a rancher. One time he shipped cattle back to Cheyenne. He wanted my father to go on the cattle cars with them—they were prize cattle. They were gone for days. Another time they took them to Chicago. Rule cattle were Herefords but they had wonderful coats from living at the coast. The boys raised cattle from calves and treated them like people, maybe more so. They went through some of the states that had snow, I don't know how the men kept warm. No sleeping bags. The loading place was over the hill in Duncans Mills—they took them over the hill down into Markham Gulch down to Ryan (?) Gulch... where the orchard – great excited

My maiden name was Parmeter. My father was French-Canadian. In French it was Parmentier. They migrated from South of France to Canada, then to Ohio then to Bodega. Mother came from New York around the Horn to San Francisco. So they met in Bodega.

How was Jenner named? Jane says it was Jenner as long as she can remember. Elinor says as far as we can tell the name was applied from 1905 on. No record before that.

Lucille Cuthill wrote about Charles Jenner an aspiring writer who build a little cabin. Charles Jenner is a mysterious fellow. There are two of them, his father who homesteaded on the Island.

Jane—too bad we don't write things down. We always think we can ask someone, then we can't. Photographs need to be dated.

When did the DeCarlys come to Duncans Mills? In the 1870s? Elinor has the date for that as 1879. Father worked at Occidental when they first came here from Switzerland until they gathered enough money to start the store.

Jane: About the boat with the motor in the center. We would have a Sunday excursion down the river to the beach to Smokey's place and get water from him. Start a fire on the beach and father would come in with a sack of crabs, we'd have flapcakes and corn beach. Somehow or other we had mustard and homemade mayonnaise. And peanut butter sandwiches and Smokey would always join us. And we'd go across to see Levi Olmstead who lived under the railroad bridge in a cabin with a beautiful flower garden.

Fitz called his house Hook & Line. Just beyond River's End. They are all talking at once about where there were bridges, tracks, roads. A guy named Manny or Manning leased land on lower Rule ranch where he had a dairy. Elinor mentions that they had horses just for the use of the men on the ranch, according to Emma Morrill.

They married very young in those days.

When we first bought this house there was a man named Eliot who owned a laundry in Sausalito, and he said his father had been an engineer on a railroad that came out here. They were English.

Jane: Talk about Casini house. An old house like something out of a storybook. The new house was later than that—I moved here in 1949 and it was built later. She remembers taking care of a little boy there who had an appendectomy. That's the first time I ever saw cherries was over by

that big old house. Right now I have two cherry trees in our orchard.

Mention of a Jenner Hospital in Santa Rosa in one of the books in the research dept. at the Santa Rosa library. Jane says there was a Tanner Hospital somewhere, presumably in Santa Rosa. The surgery was upstairs and we had to take people upstairs on stretchers. It was awful.

How'd you happen to take Nurse's Training? Jane says she wanted to be a nurse from the time she was nine years old. Her mother was the head cook at Markham Gulch camp so she and her brother hiked over the hill to school in Duncans Mills. One of our chores was to set the long tables at night and she used to pretend they were patients (?) so that's why I wanted to go to nursing school.

When people got sick or hurt they had to put them on the train and take them to the general hospital in Santa Rosa. My mother had to take care of people. The train came right up to the mill. Mother always used to say she had two daughters who were nurses because she always did the wrong thing – but that wasn't true. She didn't like it but she took care of people. Or they just had to die.

Juanita's father died in an accident here at Jenner. And she got hurt playing on the trains here. Mrs. Reardon took care of her and saved her life.

There must have been a doctor here when it was a hospital! Yes there was, that was Dr. Warren, when the mill was here.

Who?: We went to a picnic once at Fort Ross when the Call family was there.

Mr. Silva: something about people who grew African violets, merging into a general discussion about a game warden who rode a horse.

Mr. Wallen is restoring Rule Ranch. He's owned it for a long time.

Someone saw a program that mentioned the Rule Ranch and a ghost woman named Carmelita who had tossed herself off a cliff.

Someone says her son was friends with Ed Fulkerson since they were boy scouts together. Ed had a service station and movie people came in looking for a house they could use as a haunted house. So my son took them up there and they were delighted with it. That's where the idea of a ghost started.

Jane or Josephine said she heard kittens – the sounds woke her up many times—then one time she heard big footpads of a big dog. There was never anything to be seen on the porch, just the sounds. I never would tell anybody because they'd think I was crazy. Nick finally heard the noise too. This was in the lower house [at Rule Ranch?] The lower house is the first one when you open the gate. Beautiful staircase.

The old house had a widow's walk.

ET: We just heard this afternoon from Laura Furlong who lives there now that we can go up and see that house. We have to set a date. Laura is married to Jim. Maureen Furlong, Jim's sister, works in the store. More discussion about the interior of these houses.